

DECISION RECORD

EA Number: OR-050-01-010

Title of Action: Rickard Road/Hwy 20 Area Road Closure And Fences

Serial Case File or Project Number: 737210

BLM Office: Prineville District

Decision: The decision is being made to close approximately 3 miles of unimproved roads by ripping the roads and seeding the roadbeds with native plants. An additional 2.75 miles of unimproved roads would be half-tracked (i.e., half of the present road width would be ripped and reseeded). The decision also provides for construction of 3.7 miles of three-wire, high-tensile fence around the perimeter of the project area with five gates to allow pedestrian and equestrian access. The decision will physically close an area to motor vehicle use that has been administratively closed to this use since 1998 (Skeleton Fire Emergency Closure).

The fence will be built to specifications developed to minimize impacts to wildlife. The fence will be constructed using green metal t-posts, to minimize visual impacts. Project work will cease and the authorized officer contacted if any human remains, cultural, or paleontological resources are discovered. Similarly, project work will cease if any threatened, endangered, or special status species are found.

Alternatives Considered: A no-action alternative was considered. No controls on vehicle access would occur in the project area.

Rationale for Decision: The project area is designated as "Open" in the Brothers LaPine RMP (1989); however, the decision conforms with the RMP, which provides for specific actions such as fencing, barricading, patrols and issuance of citations be taken to prevent significant adverse impacts from occurring due to vehicle use. No comments on the draft Environmental Assessment/Finding of No Significant Impact were received by the BLM. The alternative chosen implements the Skeleton Fire Emergency Closure made by BLM in 1998, while providing for public access by foot or horseback to the relatively small parcel. The project area is the first parcel of BLM managed public land encountered when traveling east from Bend on State Highway 20, and is heavily impacted by vehicle use and dumping. No Action alternative would result in a continuation of vehicle use in an area administratively closed since 1998, and result in continuing dumping problems and resource impacts in the parcel.

Compliance and Monitoring: Monitoring of the area will continue by both BLM staff and Adopt-An-Open-Space volunteers. Volunteers will check the area a minimum of twice a year, to check on compliance with the travel regulations and condition of the fence and gates. BLM staff will monitor the area on an intermittent basis dependent on staffing available.

Terms / Conditions / Stipulations: None.

/s/ Robert B. Towne
Robert B. Towne,
Deschutes Resource Area Field Manager

02/06/01
Date

Attachments: Vicinity Map, Project Map